AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (Cancelled): In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a real-time information exchange system for sharing user profile information between respective users of the network devices, comprising:

a database management system connected to the network and storing the user profile information for a plurality of registered users of the information exchange system, the user profile information including a plurality of data elements, each data element having an associated one of the plurality of registered users;

wherein each data element has an associated subset of users to whom access to the data element has been granted; and

wherein users not included in the associated subset of users are denied access to the data element.

Claim 2 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 1 further including:

a profile management application executing on the information exchange system, the profile management application providing each respective user with facilities to selectively control the granting and denying of access to each of its associated data elements by other respective users.

Claim 3 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 2 wherein the user profile information includes a set of pre-defined data fields, and wherein the profile management application is adapted to dynamically create new data fields for storing a new data element, upon the request of a registered user.

Claim 4 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 3 wherein the database management system includes a plurality databases distributed across the network.

20176155.1

Claim 5 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 4 further comprising: an affiliate system, including:

an affiliate database management system connected to the network through a physical firewall, and adapted to store the user profile information for a plurality of registered users of the information exchange system, the user profile information including a plurality of data elements; and

a plurality of affiliate network devices connected to the affiliate database management system through a local network.

Claim 6 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 5 wherein the data elements stored in the affiliate database management system are categorized as one of private information and public information; and

wherein a software firewall prevents executing on the affiliate database management system prevents data elements categorized as private information from being accessed from network devices connected to the affiliate database management system through the physical firewall.

Claim 7 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 6 wherein the software firewall does not prevent data elements categorized as private information from being accessed by an affiliate network device.

Claim 8 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 4 wherein the profile management application provides each respective user with facilities to selectively push individual data elements to respective users.

Claim 9 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 4 wherein at least one network device includes intelligent synchronization software executing thereon, the intelligent synchronization software operating to detect network connectivity and selectively download updated user profile information.

Claim 10 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 9 wherein the profile management application further provides each respective registered user with facilities to define views of user profile information, each view including at least one data element associated with the registered user; and

wherein the profile management application further provides each respective registered user with facilities to selective grant and deny other respective users access to each respective view.

Claim 11 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 10 wherein the profile management application further provides each respective registered user with facilities to define user groups, each user group including at least one user; and

wherein the profile management application further provides each respective registered user with facilities to selective grant and deny the members of each data group access to each respective view.

Claim 12 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 11 wherein each stored data element is encrypted with a secret key.

Claim 13 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 12 wherein each registered user has an associated public key/private key pair, each key being selected for use in a public key cryptography system.

Claim 14 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 13 wherein, for each user that has been granted access to respective data element, a copy of the secret key associated with the data element is encrypted using the user's public key, and the encrypted secret key is stored by the database management system.

Claim 15 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 14 further comprising:

a key management system connected to the database management system, the key management system, in response to requests from the database management system, generates encryption and decryption keys.

Claim 16 (Cancelled): In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a real-time information exchange system for sharing user profile information between respective users of the network devices, comprising:

a first database management system storing a first subset of the user profile data for a plurality of registered users of the information exchange system, the first subset of profile information including a plurality of data elements, each data element having an associated one of the plurality of registered users; and

a first network server connected to the network and the first database management system, the first network server including:

a first processor; and

a first program memory connected to the first processor and having program instructions stored therein, the first processor being operable to execute the program instructions, the program instructions including:

for each registered user, selectively granting and denying access to each of the registered user's associated data elements, to other users in the network.

Claim 17 (Cancelled): The information exchange system of Claim 16 further comprising:

a second database management system storing a second subset of the user profile data for a plurality of registered users of the information exchange system, the second subset of profile information including a plurality of data elements, each data element having an associated one of the plurality of registered users; and

a second network server connected to the network and the second database management system, the second network server including:

a second processor; and

20176155.1

a second program memory connected to the second processor and having program instructions stored therein, the second processor being operable to execute the program instructions, the program instructions including:

for each registered user, selectively granting and denying access to each of the registered user's associated data elements, to other users in the network;

wherein the profile data for at least one registered user is distributed across the first and second database management systems.

Claim 18 (Cancelled): In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a method for storing member profile information that provides for selective real-time information exchange of the member profile information between network devices comprising the steps of:

Claim 19 (Withdrawn): In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a method for selecting an advertisement to be displayed on screen of said network devices that provides for selective real-time information exchange of member profile information between network devices comprising the steps of:

selecting from at least one data element associated with the member;

searching for an advertisement trigger in a database management system corresponding to the selected data elements;

determining whether the selected data elements triggers an advertisement; and

displaying an advertisement on the screen.

Claim 20 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 19, wherein the selected data element is the date.

Claim 21 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 19, wherein the selected data element is the time.

20176155.1

Claim 22 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 19, wherein the selected data element is the geographic location of the member.

Claim 23 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 19, wherein determining whether the selected data elements triggers an advertisement a generic advertisement is displayed when the selected data element does not trigger an advertisement.

Claim 24 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 19, wherein determining whether the selected data elements triggers an advertisement a specified advertisement is displayed when the selected data element triggers an advertisement.

Claim 25 (Original): In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a method for retrieving member profile information that provides for selective real-time information exchange of member profile information between external network devices and an information exchange system comprising the steps of:

granting, by a member, access to at least one data element associated with the member from the external network device;

retrieving the data elements associated with the member from the external network device to the information exchange system; and

storing the data elements on the information exchange system to automate access to member profile information from the external network device.

Claim 26 (Original): In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a method for retrieving member profile information that provides for selective real-time information exchange of member profile information between external network devices and an information exchange system comprising the steps of:

granting, by a member, access to at least one data element associated with the member from the external network device;

20176155.1

snarfing the data elements associated with the member from the external network device to an information exchange system; and

emulating the member profile on the information exchange system to automate access to the external network device.

Claim 27 (Currently amended): In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a method for pushing selected member profile information that provides for selective real-time information exchange of information between external network devices of a member and at least one selected vendor comprising the steps of:

authorizing, by a member, a subset of data elements associated with the member;

providing the subset of data elements to a recommendation engine;

converting, by the recommendation engine, the subset of data elements ~~information~~ to an information request;

forwarding the information request to the selected vendors; ~~and~~

~~accepting responses from the recommendation engine based on information returned from the selected vendors.~~

receiving recommendation information returned from the selected vendors; and

presenting to a member, a subset of the recommendation information received by the recommendation engine.

Claim 28 (Withdrawn): In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a method for synchronizing member records received from a network device that provides for selective real-time information exchange of member records between the network device and an information exchange system comprising the steps of:

receiving a member record from the network device;

querying a mapping database for the received record;

locating the record in the mapping database;

confirming editing rights to the record for the member;

determining a date for the record and a date of last synchronization; and

updating the record on the information exchange system.

Claim 29 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 28 further comprising:

searching for additional records from the network device; and

repeating the steps of said method for synchronizing member records received from a network device for each of the additional records.

Claim 30 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 28 wherein locating the record in the mapping database an instruction is sent to delete the record when the record is not located.

Claim 31 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 28 wherein confirming editing rights to the record for the member the record is not updated when editing rights are not confirmed.

Claim 32 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 28 wherein determining a date for the record and a date of last synchronization the record is not updated to the information exchange system if the record date is earlier in time than the last synchronization date.

Claim 33 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 28 wherein querying a mapping database for the received record a new mapping is created in the mapping database between the record and the user when a mapping is not located.

Claim 34 (Withdrawn): In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a method for processing instructions received from an information exchange server that provides for selective real-time information exchange of member records between a network device and the information exchange system comprising the steps of:

receiving an instruction;

performing an operation based on the instructions; and

repeating the operation for each of the received instructions.

Claim 35 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 34 wherein the instruction is a delete record instruction.

Claim 36 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 34 wherein the instruction is an update record instruction.

Claim 37 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 34 wherein the instruction is an add record instruction.

Claim 38 (Withdrawn): The method of claim 37 wherein performing an operation based on an add record instruction further comprises:
sending a mapping of the new record to the information exchange server.